



EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR AMERICAN TRADE

July 18, 2006

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House
The Capitol, H-232
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
The Capitol, H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Majority Leader
The Capitol, H-107
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker and Leaders Boehner and Pelosi:

On behalf of the Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT), I am writing to urge your support for H.R. 5684, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act, to open new opportunities for U.S. farmers, manufacturers and services providers and to improve ties with a key U.S. ally.

ECAT was founded more than three decades ago to promote economic growth through expansionary trade and investment policies. Today, ECAT's members represent all principal sectors of the U.S. economy – agriculture, financial, high technology, manufacturing, merchandising, processing, publishing and services. The combined exports of ECAT companies run into the tens of billions of dollars. The jobs they provide for American men and women – including the jobs accounted for by suppliers, dealers, and subcontractors – are located in every state and cover skills of all levels. Their collective annual worldwide sales total nearly \$2.4 trillion, and they employ approximately five and one-half million persons.

ECAT strongly supports the U.S.-Oman FTA because it will:

- *Create new opportunities for U.S. farmers by providing immediate duty-free treatment for current U.S. agricultural exports in 87 percent of the tariff lines.* Remaining tariffs will be phased out over 10 years.
- *Create new opportunities for U.S. manufacturers by providing immediate duty-free treatment for 100 percent of tariffs on current bilateral trade in consumer and industrial goods.* Remaining tariffs will be eliminated on all products within 10 years.
- *Create new opportunities for U.S. service providers and investors by liberalizing services trade and investment in Oman.*
- *Instill strong rules and protections for intellectual property, investment, and digital trade.*
- *Promote new investment opportunities to help Oman continue to modernize its economy and remain a strategic partner of the United States.*
- *Foster continued economic reform and openness, transparency and the rule of law.*

On an issue of concern for many, Oman has made the strongest commitments of any FTA partner on labor reform, agreeing to major reforms of its labor law to be enacted no later than October 31, 2006, after its required domestic consultation process. As a demonstration of its resolve to implement its commitments,

Oman enacted a Royal Decree on July 8, 2006 to jump start the process and improve key areas where it had the authority to do so.

ECAT strongly urges your support for H.R. 5684, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act.

Respectfully,

Harold McGraw III
Chairman, President and CEO, The McGraw-Hill Companies
and
Chairman, Emergency Committee for American Trade